

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PINT

SUBJ: GOVT RESPONDS AGAIN TO PDC, DECLARES DISCUSSION ENDED

REF: SANTIAGO 4240

1. SUMMARY. MINISTER SECGEN OF GOVT (COLONEL) PEDRO EWING WENT ON NATIONAL RADIO/TV NETWORK JULY 18 TO READ REPLY OF GOC TO SECOND LETTER FROM CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) PRES PATRICIO AYLWIN OBJECTING TO IMPOSITION PRIOR CENSORSHIP ON PDC-

OWNED RADIO BALMACEDA. GOC ACCUSED PDC OF COOPERATING WITH COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ABROAD AGAINST CHILE, EMPHASIZED THAT GOC WILL IMPOSE RESPECT FOR POLITICAL PARTIES RECESS, AND DECLARED PRESENT EXCHANGE OF COMMUNICATIONS ENDED. END SUMMARY.

2. GOC REPLY NOTES FIRST THAT ORIGINAL LETTERS EXCHANGED BETWEEN AYLWIN AND FORMER MIN INTERIOR OSCAR BONILLA WERE PRIVATE AND THAT 20 DAYS LATER, PRECISELY WHEN CABINET CHANGE ANNOUNCED, AYLWIN ADDRESSED SECOND LETTER TO BONILLA AND AT SAME TIME GAVE ALL THREE LETTERS TO FOREIGN PRESS. LATTER USED FULL AYLWIN TEXTS BUT ONLY EXTRACTS OF BONILLA LETTER, HENCE DECISION OF GOC TO RELEASE FULL TEXTS OF FIRST EXCHANGE, WHILE DELAYING RELEASE OF SECOND AYLWIN LETTER UNTIL NEW MIN INTERIOR

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BENAVIDES ASSUMED OFFICE. GOC PROCEEDED ABSOLUTELY CORRECTLY

THROUGHOUT BUT PARTY DID NOT, VIOLATING ELEMENTARY COURTESY IN INTEREST OF "ITS POLITICAL AMBITIONS WHICH ARE TODAY MORE INOPPORTUNE THAN EVER."

3. GOC COMMUNIQUE CONTINUES THAT AYLWIN LETTERS REVEAL FAILURE OF PDC LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE TO RESPECT RECESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AS REQUIRED BY LAW AND NATIONAL INTEREST, SEEKING TO INTERVENE IN CIVIC LIFE OF COUNTRY. GOVT WARNS PARTY LEADERSHIP THAT WHATEVER MEASURES NEEDED, NO MATTER HOW DRASTIC, WILL BE ADOPTED TO ENSURE FULL RESPECT FOR RECESS. GOVT DOES NOT THEREBY IMPOSE ITS WILL UNILATERALLY ON GOVERNED, AS ALLEGED BY AYLWIN, BUT RATHER EXPRESSES WILL OF MAJORITY OF CHILEANS.

4. GOC ASSERTS ITS FULL BACKING FOR BONILLA, DENYING THAT PDC APPROACHES HAVE MET ONLY WITH HOSTILITY. ON CONTRARY, PARTY LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN HEARD WHENEVER IT HAS SO REQUESTED AND HAS MAINTAINED RESPECTFUL AND LOYAL STANCE. TO REFUSE TO CONFUSE INSOLENCE WITH FRANKNESS IS NOT SIGN OF HOSTILITY BUT OF AUTHORITY, DECLARATION AFFIRMS, AND IN ADDITION GOVT KNOWS WELL WHO IS SINCERELY DEDICATED TO NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION AND WHO IS NOT. PDC LEADERSHIP HAS PERMITTED PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE TO BE EMPLOYED ABROAD TO ATTACK GOC, THUS JOINING INTERNATIONAL MARXIST CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILE PRECISELY AT TIME ALL CHILEANS SHOULD UNITE AGAINST THIS AGGRESSION. NO ONE CAN DEMAND RESPECT FOR HIS DIGNITY IF HE DOES NOT FIRST RESPECT PRIMARY DUTIES TO COUNTRY. NOR CAN HE HIDE BEHIND DIGNITY OF HIS PARTY WHEN GOVT CALLS ATTENTION TO ERRORS. GOVT AWARE THAT GREAT NUMBER OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS ARE WORKING HONESTLY FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION, IN AND OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT. THEY MERIT FULLEST RESPECT, AND GOVT IS "THE FIRST DEFENDER OF THEIR RIGHTS AND DIGNITY." STATEMENT ENDS BY AFFIRMING THAT GOVT CONSIDERS MATTER CLOSED.

5. COINCIDENTALLY, EXTENSIVE COVERAGE GIVEN IN TODAY'S PRESS TO FUNERAL JULY 18 OF HORACIO WALKER LARRAIN, ELDER STATESMAN, WHO WAS ONE OF FOUNDERS OF PDC. AYLWIN AND BAR ASSOCIATION PRES ALEJANDRO SILVA BASCUNAN (PDC MEMBER) DELIVERED PRINCIPAL EULOGIES TO LARGE CROWD, AND AYLWIN REMARKS IN NAME OF PDC QUOTED AT LENGTH IN MERCURIO. LATTER DID NOT HOWEVER CARRY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PORTION OF REMARKS PARALLELING THOSE MADE AT FUNERAL OF EDUARDO CRUZ COKE LAST MARCH IN DEFENSE OF ROLE OF POLITICIAN (SANTIAGO 1454), HEARD ON TAPE REBROADCAST THIS MORNING ON RADIO BALMACEDA.

6. COMMENT: OUR PDC CONTACTS APPEAR ON WHOLE PLEASED WITH AFFAIR, SINCE IT ENABLED THEM TO ENGAGE GOVT IN PUBLIC POLITICAL DEBATE AND GAVE SIGNAL TO GRASSROOTS PDC MEMBERS THAT NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IS ACTIVE. WE ARE LESS SANGUINE; SUSPECT THAT PRO-

VOCATION OF THIS KIND (PARTICULARLY LEAKING TEXTS ABROAD) PLAYS INTO HANDS OF JUNTA'S INFLUENTIAL RIGHTIST ADVISERS; AND IMAGINE THAT HARD LINE OF MILITARY WILL AS RESULT BECOME MORE RIGID. GOVT CAN IF IT WISHES TIE DOWN PDC STILL MORE TIGHTLY BY STRICTER CONSTRUCTION OF LAW CONCERNING RECESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES. IT CAN WORK TO DEVELOP A SPLIT BETWEEN PARTY LEADERSHIP AND PDC RANK AND FILE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, AS EWING STATEMENT IMPLIES IT MAY.

7. SITUATION OF PARTY LEADERSHIP IS THUR PRECARIOUS, AND SURVIVAL OF PARTY AS A LEGAL IF INACTIVE ORGANIZATION IS LESS CERTAIN THAN EVER. JUNTA HAS SO FAR REFRAINED FROM AN ALL-OUT CRACKDOWN. IF IT HEEDS EXTREME RIGHTIST COUNCIL AND TAKES THIS STEP, IT WILL BE NARROWING ITS BASE OF SUPPORT, BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD.
POPPER

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